

overhauling and greatly improving the G.I. Bill. Our legislation is modeled on the Commission's recommendation, and I am encouraged and hopeful that the new Administration will work with us to pass this important bill. Clearly, Sec. Principi's appointment is a positive development.

America's military supremacy has been unquestioned since the end of the Cold War. In the Gulf War, Bosnia, and Kosovo we proved that our armed forces set the world standard for excellence. While much of our battlefield success has to do with the superiority of our weapons systems, weapons are only as good as the people who operate them. Our success on the battlefield boils down to the quality and ability of our troops.

Today, Mr. Speaker, the military is having increasing difficulty recruiting the quantity and quality of troops it needs to meet today's challenges. Recruiting shortfalls are a serious problem, and as statistics have grown worse, recruiting budgets have soared. In addition to new advertising campaigns, the services have resorted to gimmicks, including sponsoring drag racers, deploying psychedelic humvees, and offering emergency cash giveaways. I do not criticize the armed forces for these efforts, but they highlight the need for a greater, more effective recruiting tool. The best recruiting tool is education, and we would best help our armed forces by modernizing the military's primary education benefit, the Montgomery G.I. Bill.

The Department of Defense's Youth Attitude Tracking Studies (YATS) confirm that fewer young men and women are considering serving. This shouldn't come as a surprise. "Money for college" is the top reason young men and women choose to serve. College costs have quadrupled in the last 20 years, but the G.I. Bill hasn't. At the same time, more nonservice financial assistance has become available, which has benefited society but not the military.

Today's G.I. Bill does not provide enough assistance to attract the number of high quality high school graduates the armed forces need, especially when considering the risks of service. This has forced the military to accept lower quality recruits. Statistics tell us that lower quality recruits, as measured by aptitude tests, have a much greater attrition rate. Troops that fail to make it through training or fulfill their service obligations cost taxpayers dearly.

The Montgomery GI Bill Improvements Act ensures that our all volunteer armed forces have the ability to attract quality recruits, and provides veterans with skills to better our economy and their lives. In exchange for four years of service, our legislation would provide servicemembers a benefit covering the full cost of tuition, fees and books and provide a subsistence allowance. Those opting for a shorter enlistment or enrolled in the current program would earn a basic benefit of \$900/month. Our legislation is not inexpensive, but we must invest to stay the best. The young men and women who will benefit from this legislation will have to earn it through service to our country.

Mr. Speaker, I strongly urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to join us in standing up for our armed forces, servicemembers and

veterans by supporting this much needed legislation.

HIGH-ACHIEVEMENT FOR SILVER GROVE HIGH SCHOOL

HON. KEN LUCAS

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 6, 2001

Mr. LUCAS of Kentucky. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Silver Grove High School. This is a success story about a school in a high poverty district that has overcome adversity and has become one of the models in education reform.

Silver Grove High School is one of eight schools to be recognized by Kentucky's Commissioner of Education for its outstanding performance in Kentucky's state testing program. Silver Grove High performed so well that it has become a model of the best Kentucky's public schools have to offer.

I rise today to commend Silver Grove High School and all of the educators, staff and students of this fine educational institution. I ask you to join me in congratulating Silver Grove High School and the entire community of Silver Grove on their achievements.

TRIBUTE TO MAYOR AND MRS. BILL HEXT

HON. LARRY COMBEST

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 6, 2001

Mr. COMBEST. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend Mayor Bill Hext and Jane Hext for their tremendous contributions to the city of Odessa, Texas. They were recently honored by being named "Outstanding Citizen(s) of the Year" for 2000.

The "Outstanding Citizen of the Year" award was established some 44 years ago to recognize those who dedicate their time, talent and resources to improve the quality of life for the community. Mayor and Mrs. Hext are more than civil servants, but also leaders and role models.

Their commitment to public and community service and their adherence to family- and faithbased principles truly make them ideal for such an honor. Mayor Hext has been actively involved in such organizations as the Texas Municipal League, the MOTRAN policy advisory committee and Grace Christian Fellowship, serving in various leadership positions. He was inducted into the Business Hall of Fame in 1995 in recognition of his entrepreneurial ventures in two successful businesses and served as a member of the City Council for two years. Last May Mayor Hext was elected mayor of Odessa with the focus to continue the successes and build upon new opportunities in education, health care and the economy.

Mrs. Hext has dedicated her time and talents over the years to the Ector County Independent School District schools, Meals on Wheels, the Girl Scouts, Operation Blessing,

and the Boys and Girls Club of Odessa. Mayor and Mrs. Hext went above and beyond the call to service when they established the Hext Family Foundation committed to providing resources to foster educational, medical and faith-based organizations in Odessa.

It is with great pride that I commend Mayor Bill Hext and Jane Hext for their active involvement and leadership in the community and I congratulate them on being awarded the "Outstanding Citizen(s) of the Year."

CELEBRATING THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF MRS. MARY COOK, CONGRESSIONAL LIAISON, V.A. REGIONAL OFFICE, DECATUR, GEORGIA

HON. MAC COLLINS

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 6, 2001

Mr. COLLINS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Mrs. Mary Cook for her contributions to the veterans of the State of Georgia. Over the past 34 years, Mrs. Cook, who works in the V.A. Regional Office in Decatur, Georgia, has gone above and beyond the call of duty. She has always assisted my office and other legislative offices in providing courteous, expeditious and judicial treatment of veterans in the Southeast area.

Mrs. Cook began her career in federal service in 1960 with the Federal Aviation Agency. In 1970, she came on board with the Veterans Administration, where she has remained for the last 30 years.

In all our dealings Mrs. Cook has never allowed cases to languish in government red tape. She has always been very aggressive in pursuing these cases and making sure our office was kept informed of all developments.

She has taken on many special projects over the years, including serving as the VA Regional Office Women's Veterans Coordinator from January 1993 to March 2000. As the WVC, Mrs. Cook interviewed, counseled and provided help to women veterans seeking specialized assistance. She also worked with the Women Veterans Committees at the Georgia VA Medical Centers to insure coordinated services and assistance were provided to women veterans.

Mr. Speaker, we often overlook the daily sacrifices and dedication of federal employees. Mrs. Cook is an example of a federal employee who not only takes pride in her work, but has a true dedication to the people she is charged with serving. As she retires from federal service and goes on to another phase in her life, please join me in congratulating her on a job well done and wishing her the very best in the future.

TRIBUTE TO RETIRING CARRIER EXECUTIVE T. HUME LAIDMAN

HON. JAMES T. WALSH

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 6, 2001

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Speaker, today I want to congratulate a man from my New York's 25th

Congressional District whose distinguished career has contributed to the growth and prosperity of a major employer in Central New York. This month, Mr. T. Hume Laidman will retire from the Carrier Corporation division of United Technology after 44 dedicated years of service.

Since 1957, Mr. Laidman has served in five different divisions of Carrier, participating in the company's growth from a largely domestic supplier to a truly global leader in its industry. Mr. Laidman has personally overseen the opening of manufacturing plants on five continents, and since 1997 as Vice President of Operations for Carrier Refrigeration, he has played a key role in establishing its refrigeration division, which has its worldwide headquarters in Syracuse, as a \$3 billion operation.

Raised in Florida, Mr. Laidman spent summers as a youth visiting his godmother in Cazenovia, New York. After graduating from the University of Miami, Mr. Laidman decided to pursue his career and raise his family in Central New York. While his vocation frequently took him to various countries, Mr. Laidman still found time to volunteer locally for the ski patrol at Song Mountain for more than 40 years.

Mr. Laidman's leadership at Carrier has contributed greatly to the organization's success and to its ability to support a large employee base, community organizations and civic betterment. On behalf of the people of the 25th Congressional District, it is my honor to congratulate Mr. Laidman on his well-deserved retirement and to thank him for 44 years of service to Central New York. We wish him and his family the very best.

PROBLEMS FOR TEENS WHO
WORK: WE NEED THE "YOUNG
AMERICAN WORKERS BILL OF
RIGHTS"

HON. TOM LANTOS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 6, 2001

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, during the 106th Congress, over 60 Members of Congress joined me in support of comprehensive domestic child labor law reform which would protect our children in the workplace. This bipartisan legislation—entitled "The Young American Workers' Bill of Rights Act" (H.R. 2119 in the 106th Congress)—would assist both families and teenagers' struggling with the competing interests of holding a job while gaining an education. The legislation will also reduce the incidence of injuries and deaths of minors at the workplace. I look forward to reintroducing this important bill early in the 107th Congress.

As we continue our efforts to combat the injustice of international child labor, we must not forget our own children here. The exploitation of child labor is unfortunately not a thing of the past in our country. It has become a growing problem that continues to jeopardize the health, education, development and lives of many of our children.

People often associate the evils of child labor only with Third World countries. But

American teenagers are also negatively impacted by exploitation on the job. Our economy has changed considerably since the days when teenagers held after school jobs at a "Mom and Pop" corner drug store or soda fountain. In today's low unemployment economy, teenagers are hired to work part-time to fill-in or to hold jobs previously held by adults in full-time positions. Many high-school students are working 30 and even 40 hours a week, and often they are working well past midnight on school nights. Research shows that long hours on the job take away time needed for schoolwork and family responsibilities.

Mr. Speaker, studies have shown that the majority of children and teenagers who hold jobs in the United States are not working to support their families, but rather are employed to earn extra spending money. Employment is important in teaching young people the value of work, and I see nothing wrong with minors working to earn extra spending money. I think it is a serious problem, however, when teenagers work more hours for spending money than they spend working for their education. It is important for children to learn the value of work, but a solid education, not after school jobs, are the key to a successful future. We need to set sensible limits on the hours that minors are permitted to work during the school year so that our children can focus on their primary job—earning a good education.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to call the attention of my colleagues to an article which appeared in the New York Times recently entitled "Problems Seen For Teenagers Who Hold Jobs" which was written by Steven Greenhouse. The article discusses some of the problems many teenagers face when they hold a job during the school year. According to the article, a study of the National Academy of Sciences found that when teenagers work more than 20 hours a week, it often leads to lower grades, higher alcohol use and too little time with parents and families.

Mr. Speaker, I will place the entire text of this article in the RECORD, but I would like to call special attention to a couple of paragraphs that are particularly indicative of the problems we face:

"One recent Friday, Alicia, [a] waitress, a senior at Governor Livingston Regional High School in Berkeley Heights, N.J., acknowledged that she had put in a grueling week. Alicia, who works at Johnny Rockets, a 1950's-style diner at the Short Hills Mall, had missed one day of school that week and arrived late the four other days. The reason was that she had to work past midnight on Tuesday and Thursday, and that came after working from 10:30 a.m. until 12:30 a.m. on Saturday and Sunday.

"It's fun, and I get a lot of money—I made \$240 on Saturday alone," she said, noting that she sometimes earns \$40 in tips in an hour when it's busy.

"I'm not doing good in school this semester," Alicia acknowledged, her tone half rueful, half isn't-this-cool. "Because of work, I come into school late or I stay home because I'm so tired."

"Joan Tonto, one of Alicia's teachers, said, 'She's tired when she comes into school, and by sixth period she's too tired to work on problems in class. I've talked to Alicia about how her job is affecting her in school, and she says, 'I'm making a lot of money, Mrs. Tonto.'"

Mr. Speaker, it is clear to me from reading these excerpts and from reviewing a recent study by the National Academy of Sciences, that it is time for us to carefully weigh the benefits of children working against the costs that too much work can take on a child's academic performance and healthy development. At what point does the desire to earn extra spending money negatively effect the ability of a child to perform to her or his learning potential at school? According to Steven Greenhouse, 16- and 17-year-olds are working 40 hours a week on top of 30 hours in the classroom and in many cases education is taking a back seat to after school employment.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that the entire article "Problems Seen For Teenagers Who Hold Jobs" be placed in the RECORD. I urge my colleagues to read this article and to join me in cosponsoring "The Young American Workers' Bill of Rights Act." This legislation will ensure that the job opportunities available to our youth are meaningful, safe, and healthy, and our bill will encourage—not discourage—their healthy development and will give them the tools to help prepare them for a productive adult life.

[From the New York Times, Jan. 29, 2001]

PROBLEMS SEEN FOR TEENAGERS WHO HOLD
JOBS

(By Steven Greenhouse)

Some weekdays, Alicia Gunther, 17, works past midnight as a waitress at a New Jersey mall, and she readily admits that her work often hurts her grades and causes her to sleep through first period.

Jason Ferry, a high school junior, loves working 30 hours a week as a cashier at a Connecticut supermarket, but he acknowledges that when he gets home from work at 9:30 p.m. he usually does not have enough time to study for big tests.

For decades, the conventional wisdom has been that it is great for teenagers like these to hold after-school jobs because they teach responsibility, provide pocket money and keep the teenagers out of trouble.

But in a nation where more than five million teenagers under 18 work, a growing body of research is challenging the conventional wisdom and concluding that working long hours often undermines teenagers' education and overall development.

In the most important study, two arms of the National Academy of Sciences—the National Research Council and the Institute of Medicine—found that when teenagers work more than 20 hours a week, the work often leads to lower grades, higher alcohol use and too little time with their parents and families.

Influenced by such studies, lawmakers in Connecticut, Massachusetts, Alabama and other states have pushed in recent years to tighten laws regulating how many hours teenagers can work and how late they can work. In Massachusetts, several lawmakers are seeking to limit the maximum amount of time 16-year-olds and 17-year-olds can work during school weeks to 30 hours, down from the current maximum of 48 hours.

In 1998, Connecticut lawmakers reduced the maximum number of hours 16-year-olds and 17-year-olds can work during school weeks to 32 hours, down from 48, and last year they debated imposing fines on employers who violate those limits. In New York, students that age are allowed to work up to 28 hours during school weeks, while in New Jersey the maximum is 40 hours.